



News

of the Iowa Mission District of the North American Lutheran Church

www.iowamissiondistrict.com

September 2019

A Word from the Dean

HALLELUJAH!

Praise the Lord!
Praise the Lord from the heavens;
Praise Him in the heights!
Praise Him all His angels;
Praise Him, all His host!
Praise Him, sun and moon,
Praise Him, all you shining stars!
Praise Him, you highest heavens,
and you waters above the heavens!
Let them praise the name of the Lord!
- Psalm 148:1-5a

The book of Psalms is the hymnal of ancient Israel. There are psalms written for many specific purposes in the worship life of the people – expressions of thanksgiving, petitions for deliverance, prayers of lament, liturgies for the enthronement of the King, psalms of praise for creation and harvest, in praise of the law, and so on. The book of Psalms ends with 5 psalms of praise, often known as the Hallel, or Hallelujah Psalms. Each of these psalms, Psalm 146 – Psalm 150, begin and end with the exclamation, “Hallelujah!”, most often translated as “Praise the Lord!”

It is a fitting end to the Psalter, for these psalms summarize the proper response of praise and worship to God, our creator and redeemer. It is as if, having exhausted all of the different responses to God of petition, confession, thanksgiving, lament and the rest, what remains is simple wonder and praise for all that God has done, indeed, for all that God is. For here, the focus is not on our needs or our sin or even our blessings, but upon God Himself in His majesty and glory.

It is easy to become so caught up in the troubles of this world and the troubles of our life that we place all of our attention upon these things. It is easy to become so caught up in the controversies swirling about us in the church and in our society that we begin to think that our chief purpose is to take up “arms against a sea of troubles and by opposing end them.” And indeed, we are called to remain steadfast in obedience to God’s Word and to trust in Him to uphold us in all circumstances.

But with such an ending to the Psalter, we are given the message that all of our responses to God, even those of obedience and faith, are to lead us to the ultimate response of adoration and praise. When all is said and done, when all of our questions are answered, all our worries are gone, all of our pain and sorrow and troubles are overcome, what we are left with is a life of unending joy and untiring praise of God.

For now, we are given these glimpses of our promised life to come in the wonder of a starry summer night, in the gentle breathing of a child at rest, in the love and care of our life together, in the gathering of God’s people around His Table of Grace, and in the songs and praise offered to our Lord and God.

Praise the Lord!

Pastor Marshall Hahn, Dean, Iowa Mission District, NALC



Sola Gratia—Grace: That's It!

Pr. Paul F. Breddin
West Des Moines, Iowa

How often haven't we heard these words? *"The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all"*, and *"Grace be unto you and peace from God our Father, and from our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ"*. If we are listening and partaking in divine services, then we have heard them. Maybe we hear them so often, they simply roll over us like water off a duck's back, without our really appreciating them.

When I was an eighth grader, we had to learn the words of Portia's speech on the quality of mercy from Shakespeare's play *The Merchant of Venice*, because our teacher believed that taking them to heart would make us better people. It would teach us about being merciful and compassionate.

Mercy and compassion are characteristics of God towards the human race.

Article IV of *The Augsburg Confession* states *"that we receive forgiveness of sin and become righteous before God by grace through faith, for Christ's sake, when we believe that Christ suffered for us and that for His sake our sin is forgiven and righteousness and eternal life given to us"*. This summarizes what St. Paul says in Ephesians 2:4,5 and 8 - *"But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ – by grace you have been saved...For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so*

that no one may boast."

What a wonderful God is our God: merciful, compassionate, gracious, forgiving. So different from many of us! Through our believing in Jesus Christ and what He has done for us through His innocent suffering and death, God gives us the incredible riches of forgiveness of our sins, eternal life, salvation, and adoption as His children. God does this for the sake of Jesus Christ. And what did we do to receive all this? Nothing!

Grace and peace go together. The grace of God leads us to have internal peace, the peace of a quiet and joyous conscience because of all that God has done. We have the assurance of a blessed future in eternity. We could say that grace and peace sum up the Gospel message, which is the message of Christianity.

God's grace can be difficult for people to believe, but if we want to be sure of God's grace, we need to listen to God's Word, and take it to heart. Grace rests on God's Word. Grace clings to God's Word. It is God's greatest gift to us, because in grace God gives Himself to us.

My wife has told me that she was taught a mnemonic for grace, which I'd never heard before. However, it clarifies it. Grace is **God's Riches A t Christ's Expense**. Grace! That's It!

**Grace is
God's Riches
A t Christ's
Expense.**

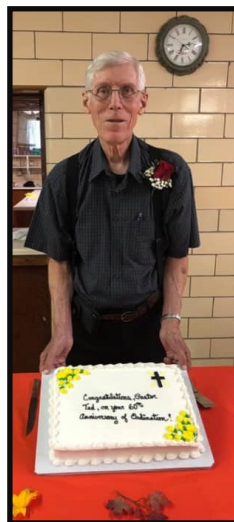
This and That from around the Iowa Mission District



Disaster Relief Quilts

Helpers of all ages showed up at Faith Lutheran Church, Monona, to pack the 52 quilts donated to the NALC Disaster Relief. The quilts were transported to the NALC Convocation in Indianapolis by Faith's delegate, Brent Bruns.

Pastor Ted Ager's 60th Ordination Anniversary



On May 31, 1959, Pastor Ted Ager was ordained to the ministry of Word and Sacrament at First Lutheran Church in Manchester, IA. On August 18, 2019, Pastor Ager was honored at a celebration of his 60th anniversary of ordination at Old East Paint Creek Lutheran Church in Waterville, Iowa. Iowa Mission District Dean, Pastor Marshall Hahn led the renewal of ordination vows, and Pastor Ken Kimball, pastor of Old East, offered the prayers. Following the brief service, Pastor Ager shared memories of his life. One special memory was the story of his marriage proposal to his late wife, Mae. They had their first date in Papua New Guinea the night before he left for home in the U.S. They stayed in touch through letters that took weeks to reach their destination. He proposed to her by letter—and she sent a telegram accepting his proposal!!

Youth Ministry Trip

After nearly a year of planning and prayers, 55 youth and adults from the NALC Iowa Mission District had the opportunity to do mission work in Wilmington, NC for Hurricane Florence relief August 22-29. The group ascended upon First Lutheran Church in Manchester the night of the 21st to meet and greet one another as they took off from there early the next morning. The first day was a lot of traveling and our first stop in Lexington, KY. There we were able to see the magnificent construction of the Ark Encounter. Everyone came away with a greater appreciation of the Biblical narrative of Noah's Ark and the ministry God did through him. After an over-night at a church, we were on our way to Wilmington the next morning.

We arrived in Wilmington the next day after a long travel. We were greeted with open arms by our new ministry partners in the south. The work that we had the opportunity to take part in was demolition, rebuilding, flooring, cleaning, and much more. We had three days of solid work at our different work sites. We couldn't go all that way without including some fun, though! We had the chance to see the Battleship North Carolina, take in a Wilmington Sharks baseball game, go to the beach, and eat some great seafood.

On Sunday, we worshipped with our host congregation and we able to bring gifts from Iowa to bless our hosts and our new friends. We drove through the night to make it back to Iowa on Monday morning. As always, our missionary work was blessed by God both in the people that we met, and the work that we have done. We have new friends and connection in North Carolina and a wonderful sense of mission work in the world.

We look forward to next year's mission trip!!!

Pastor Tony D. Ede

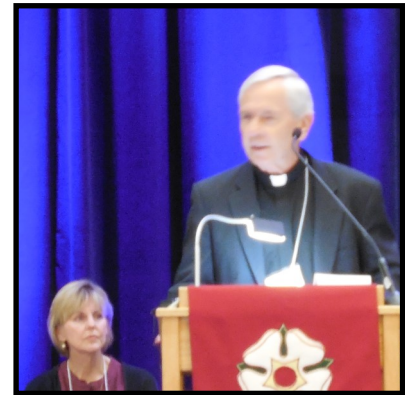


North American Lutheran Church 2019 Convocation

Walking by the Spirit, With the Fruit of the Spirit



Left: Bishop-elect Dan Selbo is introduced to the convocation following his installation during the closing worship service on August 10, 2019. Bishop-elect Selbo will assume his duties as our new Bishop on October first. Outgoing Bishop John Bradosky led the delegates in welcoming our new Bishop. Bishop Bradosky has served our church well for the past eight years and was honored at a special dinner Thursday evening.



Above: Bishop-elect Selbo addresses the convocation following his election Friday afternoon. His wife, Mary is in the background.

Anniversary Recognitions

*Each year at the convocation congregations and pastors are recognized who have reached significant milestones in their ministries. **Badger Lutheran Church** in our Mission District is celebrating their **150th** anniversary. The following Pastors also received recognition who are celebrating the following anniversaries of their ordinations:*

Pastor Ted Ager—60 years

Pastor David Andrae—50 years

The Rev. Dr. Amy Schiffrin—35 years

Pastor Barbara Wills—30 years



During Mission District breakout sessions on Wednesday evening, pastors, delegates and visitors from the Iowa district met for Bible study. And throughout the convocation people were busy and involved.



Announcements

2019 Upcoming Events

September 14 — Iowa Mission District Convocation, First Lutheran, Manchester, IA

September 28—Stewards of God's Influence workshop, Bethany, Laurens, IA

October 5—Stewards of God's Influence workshop, First, Manchester, IA

These workshops are presented by the NALC's Living and Giving Stewardship Team. Both are from 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Presenters are Pastors Tony D. Ede and Ron Voss. For more information or to register, please contact Pastor Voss at 312-513-3567 or servantofchristnalc@gmail.com.

April 20-21, 2020—Pastors'/Lay Ministers' Retreat, Riverside Bible Camp, Story City

Supporting the Work of Christ

One important part of the convocation each year is adopting a budget. Members and congregations of the NALC have a good track record of supporting the work of Christ through their donations. One of the concerns expressed by individuals coming to the microphone at the convocation each year is that there are a few congregations who offer no support at all for the work of the church. The Apostle Paul tells the church at Corinth: "The point is this: he who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and he who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. Each one must do as he has made up his mind, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to provide you with every blessing in abundance, so that you may always have enough of everything and may provide in abundance for every good work. (2 Cor 9:6-8) We give thanks to the many in our Mission District and congregations who sow bountifully, generously supporting our Lords work through the NALC at every level.

Donations and Correspondence

Checks sent to the Mission District for support should be made out to the ***Iowa Mission District, NALC***, and mailed to Pastor Gary Burkhalter at **312 E Mission St, Strawberry Point, IA 52076**.

Correspondence for Mr. Craig Lease, Mission District Secretary, should be sent to **405 7th St. N., Northwood, IA 50459**

Items for the Mission District newsletter (pictures, news, etc.) are best sent via e-mail to Pastor Barbara Wills at barbaramwills@gmail.com.

The Iowa Mission District website may be found at: www.iowamissiondistrict.com. If your congregation has a web site, and you would like to have the web address linked to your church name on the Mission District web site, please send the web address to me, Pastor Barbara Wills, at barbaramwills@gmail.com.



Steadfast In God's Word

Why Me? Trusting the Lord in Times of Trial

Why me? This is the lament of the ages. Rarely will we hear people ask, "Why did this happen to me?" when all is going well or when something extraordinarily delightful happens in their lives. But when disappointments, tragedy or struggles come, they're usually followed by, "Why did this happen to me?" The question echoes through the ages—and through the pages of Holy Scripture. As people of God, we may find it helpful to look to God's word for the answers. We can meditate on Scripture passages that talk about suffering and ponder the prayers of God's people who have expressed their pain and questions in the Psalms.

When the Lord God created the heavens and the earth—and all that exists—He saw that it was very good. He created man and woman in His image and placed them in a beautiful garden filled with all the things they would need for a healthy and beautiful life. There was only one commandment—"You may surely eat of every tree of the garden, but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die." (Genesis 2:16b-17) We know what happened next—tempted by the serpent, "Did God really say....?", Eve reasoned that it would be good to be like God. Could it be such a bad thing to know what God knows? She ate. She gave some of the fruit to Adam, and he ate. Death entered the world, and with it came suffering—broken relationships, pain, heavy toil, disease, war...the list goes on. But even at the beginning, despite their sin, the Lord loved His creatures and promised that an offspring of the woman would one day crush the head of the serpent. This was the first prophecy of the coming of the Lord Jesus who would take our sins upon Himself, descend into the stronghold of death, and destroy sin, death and the devil. In His resurrection, our Lord Jesus claimed the victory that gives us life through our trust in Him. This is the abiding promise that gives us the assurance that we are not alone, and that we will escape eternal death and live forever with the Lord. Through the ages, God never forgot His promise, and His care and mercy continued. In Psalm 23 King David expresses his trust in the Lord, his Shepherd. "*Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I shall fear no evil, for thou art with me.... Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine*

enemies...." Knowing that our Lord is with us in the most painful and difficult times, despite our disobedience and rebellion, is the greatest comfort, and sustains us in our times of trial when we turn to the Lord in trust and repentance.

The Apostle Paul, in the New Testament, was one who came late to the faith. After persecuting the followers of Christ as a young Pharisee, he encountered the Lord Jesus on the road to Damascus, and came to understand the grace of God given to us through our faith in Christ and His death and resurrection. Traveling extensively to preach this Good News, Paul suffered beatings, stoning, imprisonment, death threats, and alienation from his former colleagues and friends. Yet he held fast to his faith in Christ, saying boldly, "*I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us.*" (Romans 8:18) He also spoke of a "thorn in the flesh". *Three times I besought the Lord about this, that it should leave me; but he said to me, 'My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.' I will all the more gladly boast of my weaknesses, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. For the sake of Christ, then, I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities; for when I am weak, then I am strong.* (2 Corinthians 12:8-10) Paul always held fast to the promises of Christ, saying "*I am sure that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.*" (Romans 8:38-39)

Like our Lord Jesus, Paul knew the Psalms well and prayed them often. These prayers have sustained the weak and weary through the ages, as they faced various struggles in their lives. In Psalm 121 the psalmist declares, "*My help comes from the Lord who made heaven and earth.... The Lord is your keeper, he will keep your life. The Lord will keep your going out and your coming in, from this day forth and forevermore.*" Amen. Thanks be to God!

Pastor Barbara M. Wills

Congregations of the Iowa Mission District

Ackley: **Our Saviour's**, Dan Buhs, Lay Minister
Avoca: **Trinity**, Pr. Eric Meissner
Badger: **Badger Lutheran**, Pr. Scott Meier
Boyden: **St. John**, Pr. Mark Lund
Dorchester: **Waterloo Ridge**, Call Process
Eagle Grove: **Evangelical Lutheran**, Pr. Jason Cooper
Eagle Grove: **Samuel Lutheran**, Pr. Rich Taylor
Ellsworth: **Trinity**, Pastor Jon Rollefson
Emmons, MN: **Emmons**, Pr. David Schafer, Interim
Gilmore City: **First**, Tracy Nerem, Lay Minister
Grafton: **Emmanuel**, Pr. Solveig Zamzow
Greene: **St. John (Vilmar)**, Pr. Christopher Martin
Gunder: **Marion**, Pr. Marshall Hahn
Harlan: **Bethlehem**, Pr. Ronald Rasmussen
+Huxley: **Shepherd of the Prairie**,
Scott Licht, Lay Minister
Irwin: **St. Paul**, Pr. Ronald Rasmussen
Laurens: **Bethany**, Pr. David Klappenbach
Manchester: **First**, Pr. Tony D. Ede
+Monona, **Faith**: Pr. Mel Harris
Northwood: **Peace**, Pr. Barbara Wills
Palmer: **St. John's**
Plainfield: **St. John**, Pr. Kim Thacker
Readlyn: **St. Matthew**, Pr. Jean Rabary
Readlyn: **Zion**, Pr. Jean Rabary
Robins: **Servants of Christ**, Pr. Ron Voss
+Rochester, MN: **Emmanuel**, Pr. David Steffenson
Ruthven: **Zion**, Pr. Thomas Summerfield
St. Ansgar: **First**, Pr. Christopher Staley
St. Olaf: **Norway**, Pr. Marshall Hahn
Sheldon: **St. Paul**, Call process
+Sibley: **Faith**, Pr. Tim Nappé
Spencer: **Trinity**
Strawberry Pt.: **Mission in Christ**, Pr. Gary Burkhalter
Thor: **Ullensvang**, Pr. Darryl Landsverk
Waterville: **Old East Paint Creek**, Pr. Ken Kimball
Waukon: **Old West Paint Creek**, Pr. Ken Kimball

+ indicates mission congregation

The following pastors are available for pulpit supply:

Pastor Paul Breddin—515--528-2284
 Pastor James Glesne—563-380-8110
 Pastor Jack Miller—(507) 798-2408
 Pastor David Steffenson—253-302-9845 (Sundays)
 Pastor Paul Weeg- -641-381-0675



Iowa Mission District Leadership

Pastor Marshall Hahn, Dean—
stolafparish@neitel.net
Craig Lease, Secretary—
pdlease@gmail.com
Pastor Burkhalter, Treasurer—
pqburkhalter52@hotmail.com

Mission District Council Members:

Pastor Jason Cooper—
cooper_id@yahoo.com

Pastor Mark Lund—
pastormarklund@gmail.com

Pastor Christopher Martin—
pastorcwmartin@gmail.com

Chris Schlee—
schleemasonry@hotmail.com

Kathy Scharnhorst—
gaf@butler-bremer.com

Mission District Communicator
(newsletter editor/web master):

Pastor Barbara Wills—
barbaramwills@gmail.com

*The Iowa Mission District
has 36 congregations.*



Pastor Tim Nappe is also available for pulpit supply. His primary focus is his ministry with “Reaching the Unreached”, and he will share information about this mission work whenever he does pulpit supply for a congregation. Contact information: 712-331-4245. Or email at pastortim.milford@gmail.com

Iowa Mission District Convocation Registration

Saturday, September 14, 2019
at First Lutheran Church, Manchester, IA

The 2019 annual Convocation of the Iowa Mission District will take place at First Lutheran Church, Manchester, on Saturday, September 14. Our theme is “Sola Gratia” and we are pleased to have the Rev. Dr. Nathan Yoder, Member of the Commission on Theology and Doctrine, and Dean of the Carolinas Mission District, as our keynote speaker. The Convocation is our opportunity to gather as brothers and sisters in Christ for the purpose of fellowship, worship, learning and sharing of ideas and to hear up-dates on the work and mission of the NALC. We also will have a business session to conduct the necessary business of the District. As you prepare for the convocation please be thinking of nominations for Secretary of the Mission District and the following Council positions: Lay member (2 years to fill out a vacancy), Lay (3 year) and Clergy (3 year). A nomination form will be included in this month’s Iowa Mission District News.

According to Article 4.01 of the IA- MD Constitution **all clergy persons within the territory of the District and two lay delegates of each congregation are eligible to vote at the Convocation.** In addition, we strongly encourage congregational participation beyond the delegates and clergy—visitors welcome! There is no cost to the event other than a free-will offering for lunch. A worship offering will also be taken and designated to a worthy domestic or international cause. The day will begin at 8:00 am with registration and a time for fellowship with coffee and refreshments. A service of Holy Communion will begin at 9:00, and the closing of the convocation will be at 3:00 pm.

To help with planning, and so that we may have appropriate name tags for **delegates and visitors**, we ask that you fill out the registration form below and return it via the postal service **no later than Thursday, September 12**, and mail to **Pastor Barbara Wills, PO Box 202, Northwood, IA 50459**. You may also send the registration by e-mail (barbaramwills@gmail.com), but please be sure to include all the information on the form.

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(Please fill out a separate form for each person.)
.....

Name:

Address:

Phone/email: _____ / _____

Congregation & Town: _____

Clergy _____ Lay Delegate _____ Visitor _____

Biographical Information of Nominee

Name: _____

Position for which you are being nominated: _____

Congregational Member at: _____

City: _____

Occupation: _____

Tell us something about yourself (*family, hobbies, etc.*)

How do you understand your faith?

How have you been active in the church?

Please list one of your favorite Bible verses and tell why it has meaning for you.

Signature

Please sign above to indicate you are willing to serve if elected and mail this completed form to:

*Mr. Craig Lease, Secretary
Iowa Mission District, NALC
405 7th Street N.
Northwood, IA 50459*
